channels." Now, all this may be true under one aspect.

It is almost impossible to characterize the present century by any one tendency whatever. The diffusion of knowledge, whether it be by new discovery, or research into the discoveries of the past, may be its most remarkable characteristic. But such a postulate as that above, which would receive immediate assent from many, would appear a positive error to others, because irreconcileable with their own pursuits; and cannot be received as of sufficiently general application, at least if painting and sculpture be included. These arts are as much under the dominion of the past as that of architecture; in Germany, painting is, perhaps, more so. The writer continues:—"But by a strange anomaly, whilst painting and sculpture, which serve to express the constant and unalterable forms of animated nature, became obedient to this want of innovation, it seems that architecture alone, called to give to inert materials variable forms, changing without end, can express itself only with the aid of antique conceptions!" We have long since pleaded, that this common accusation against the modern practice of architecture, was not made with due consideration for the comparative state of other fields of ingenuity, and however we are able to defend the unquestionable lack of invention in modern times, common fairness requires that the state of architecture should not be estimated without a comparison with other branches of ingenuity, and a correct estimate of what may have always been, and may really be, inseparable from its existence. We believe that architectural forms are impressed upon the recollection, as they are not in painting and sculpture, and that the opprobrium of adherence to precedent might be attached to works both of literature and art, where its presence is scarcely suspected by ordinary observers. The error of architectural critics is, that they forget, that *originality* is not necessarily a merit. One of the most original conceptions in architecture was placing the capitals of columns where the bases should be, yet that did not raise the value of the work of art. Thus it is, that projects such as we are about to describe, become the admiration of those who know a little, and a supposed cause for shame in those who follow in what is called—the beaten track;—skill in architecture is not necessary to produce a hundred such inventions.

With this desire of avoiding any resemblance with buildings devoted to pagan worship, the Count Cesare della Chiesa di Benevello, of Turin, has projected a building, which, although of so singular a character as to merit particular description, does not, we say, merit the rank as a work of art, which seems to be claimed for it. The building, if it were capable of being executed, would consist of a vast globe, covered with gilt metal, intended to symbolize the universe, suspended in the air, or supported only by eight colossal cherubim, in kneeling posture, ranged in pairs. In the intervals between each couple of figures, are placed the great doors and the steps of ascent, the whole being raised upon a lofty stylobate, elevated upon an exteoded superstructure, which is ornamented with a bas-relief, representing the history of humanity from its commencement to its end. The stylobate is reached by three staircases, consecrated to the three divine virtues. At the four angles of the lower stylobate are placed figures in bronze, emblematic of the four evangelists, moveable upon pivots, so that by their wings they will turn with the wind, and, says the account, give animation to the building by their motion. The four staircases, already spoken of as giving access to the building, are consecrated to the four cardinal virtues. On the summit of the two intersecting arcs which support them, the pavement of the church is placed a little above the lowest part of the globe. In the centre of the space is the altar; and from it a column can be raised to a considerable elevation, supporting a tabernacle in gilt bronze. The incense introduced within the cavity of this column would escape from the censers of the angels, grouped around the Divine image, at the summit. The choir for the priests is disposed around the central altar, a communication being provided between this station and the sacristies beneath. Round the sphere, to nearly half its height, are disposed the benches for the people, in concentric ranges, surmounted by a range of galleries. The upper hemisphere represents the heavens spangled with stars; and there are three ranges of gilded figures, representing the three principal hierarchies, encircling it. At the summit of the sphere is an opening for light, glazed. There will be represented, says the account, the vigilant eye of Providence, shedding rays tinged with the seven colours of the rainbow, thus recalling to all the faithful the sublime words of Genesis, the first pronounced by the eternal power over chaos, "Let there be light." The segment of the sphere beneath the altar, is reserved for the organs. They are so disposed, that the sound will penetrate into the church by four openings around the altar, and the organist has also the means of directing the sound through the instruments of the celestial quire above, so that he can, turn by turn, depict the groans of hell, or the harmonious anthems of the blessed. Two ambos, and two baptismal fonts, or two confessionals, in the intervals of the four doors, will complete the interior distribution. Bells are placed near the level of the tribune, or gallery,—supports being carried up from the kneeling figures which bear the globe. The Count Benevello thus argues in favour of his design:—"If material and terrestial things ought to have an influence upon our minds, to recal them to the sublime and incorporeal, it seems to me that this would be the effect of this temple suspended in the air, enriched by so many symbols of our faith, and so many colossal works of sculpture." • • "When there is joined the mystery of the light with varied tints suffusing the spectacle, the alternation of harmony sometimes arising from the recesses of the earth, and sometimes gushing from the heights of heaven, perhaps it would not be an error on my part to think, that this temple would surpass in majesty and intensity of sensation, the ordinary character of our religious edifices, whether those in which the view is interrupted at each instant by columns and pilasters, or in which the sacred words, always uncertain and confused, reach with difficulty a small number of auditors, or, in fine, where often nothing can be found to recal any idea of the sanctity of the place, if at all times the appearance does not occasion ideas which are nothing less than profane."

In some remarks, which are appended to a notice of this design, by a French contemporary, we find several judicious comments upon this singular project. It is feared, that the eyes of the assembly would be more occupied in watching the motions of the priests, or the different effects of the light, as perchance the green ray might fall upon the face of a pretty woman, than attending to the words of the divine office; and that the circular arrangement is the worst that could be chosen. Some fear may also be expressed at the possibiljty of producing a structure better adapted for a swallow's nest than for a church; and should *one* support fail, the whole assembly might bowl away in a novel, but very unpleasant manner. At least, the appearance of insecurity it would be hardly possible to overcome; and the long steps of ascent would be especially inconvenient to old and young. Nevertheless, to ourselves, although the general design does not appear to merit any higher encomium than we have passed upon it, some of its features, and some of the arrangements of the interior, seem to be curious, if not praiseworthy, and suggestive at a time when opinions differ as to the best arrangement for ecclesiastical edifices.

GLASGOW AND WEST OF SCOTLAND ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE FINE ARTS.—On Monday week, a meeting of the members of this association was held in Carrick's Hotel. The secretary, read an interim report of the committee of management. It proposed that the name of the association should henceforth be "The Glasgow Art-Union," and that the system of money prizes should be adopted. The prize picture of last year—"Prince Charles Edward" had been engraved, and was in course of distribution to each member. The rules and regulations, drawn up from those of the London Art-Union, were then submitted, as also the draft of a petition to the Privy Council applying for license. The report, the regulations, with a few verbal alterations, and the petition, were agreed to.—*Glasgow Reformers' Gazette.*

THE GRANITE QUARRIES OF EGYPT.*

THE granite quarries of Syene remain a lasting proof of the greatness of ancient Egypt. At that place (now called E' Souan) the valley of the Nile is traversed by a range of granite rocks, which rises in some places to a height of several hundred feet, forming that barrier in the course of the river which is the cause of the cataract of E' Souan. On either side of this range extends the bare *Sahara*. The sole elements of the scene are sky and granite. Exposed to the full action of the weather, these rocks are in a state of continual decomposition, and by that process have formed vast heaps of siliceous sand, composed of the crystals of granite in all stages of comminution. Enormous piles of boulders lie about in every direction, but principally in the bed of the river, where the rock appears to have given way to the force of the water, and crumbled down into these fragmentary masses. The rocks lying on the east bank of the Nile are the most compact and solid, and it is here that they have been quarried of those huge blocks which were used by the ancient Egyptians for obelisks, colossi, and other architectural works. These quarries extend for several miles along the granitic formation. The cuttings do not penetrate deeply into the substance of the rock, but in whatever part the surface is firm, and without seams, it will be found to have been cut into, and turned to advantage.

Even at the present day, after a long lapse of ages of total abandonment, the operations of the workmen may be traced with the greatest ease. In one part, the fresh surface of the rock shews distinctly where a block of stone was removed; in another, you meet a large obelisk, half detached, and to appearance as if just fallen from the perpendicular, like the less fortunate of Cleopatra's Needles at Alexandria: here are long lines of marks produced by the wedges of the workmen, and there heaps of chips, the result and refuse of more minute operations. Without difficulty you might fancy that the quarry-men were but absent at a meal, and would return to resume their work.

The mode of separating the blocks was very simple. Along a certain line of surface, a row of wedges was wrought, at intervals, into the substance of the rock, which, after being advanced to the necessary depth, were struck with heavy hammers; a rent was thus formed in the line of operations, and the superincumbent mass, being detached, was easily separated by proper levers. This is the very plan now adopted in our own quarries, with the exception, that, in those I have seen in this country—for instance, at Peterhead,—the wedges are not applied to the rock *in situ*, but to large masses, which are first detached by blasting. This may suit the Scotch granites, which have a much greater number of seams than the true Syenite; but it would never produce an obelisk, even on the banks of the Nile.

The most remarkable circumstance connected with the quarries is, that the surface of the rock exposed in the quarrying is hardly at all discoloured by the long exposure it has been subjected to, and when compared with a freshly-broken bit of rock, presents the full rosy colour of the feldt-spar. So striking is this, that on seeing the two compared, one naturally asks himself if these can possibly be the quarries wrought by the ancient Egyptians—that people whose history almost extends beyond the bounds of the legitimate historic age! As in the case of the tombs of Baben-el-Melook, and most of the earliest monuments of Egypt, the finger of time seems to have respected the works of this extraordinary people: it is only where sacrilegious man has been able to interfere, that desolation has overtaken their all-but-everlasting works. Nearly four thousand years have fled since the Augustan age of ancient Egypt; its civilization, its dynasties, and its very people have disappeared from the face of the earth. But these eternal rocks remain to attest the power and greatness of that kingdom, and to demonstrate to him who is willing to learn, that, although to the great bulk of mankind, forty centuries may be all but inconceivable, it is but a drop in the ocean to the countless ages through which has rolled on this our terrestrial orb.

In order to be able to draw any deductions

* From a Journal by Dr. J. B. Mitchell, still unpublished, of a series of travels with Lord Ellesmer, in the Turkish and other dominions.—Egypt, Syria, Palestine, the isles of ancient Greece, &c. —In the latter accompanied also by Mr. Layard.

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